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## Debunking the Scare Myths

# The CIA: a Wise Appraisal

THE U.S. INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY. By Lyman B. Kirkpatrick Jr. Hill and Wang. 212 pp. \$7.95

By JOSEPH C. GOULDEN

The Allende government crashes, and the fingers of blame reflexively point towards Langley, Va., the pleasant residential suburb five miles north of my desk that is the home of the CIA.

Downtown, other "CIA" hobgoblins are viewed with alarm: the pensioned spymaster Hunt using in retirement, against the infidel Ellsberg, the techniques (and Cubans) he once marshaled against heathens elsewhere; ITT scheming to hand CIA a million bucks to bust a Chilean election; stirrings of inquisitory interest even among Congressmen, guys normally as moribund as the stone dinosaurs outside the Smithsonian. The September issue of "Progressive" — edited by men who should and do, know better — features a black-on-white scare cover:

### THE CIA'S DIRTY TRICKS UNDER FIRE AT LAST.

As the lynch mob forms, serious citizens might pause to

read a serious book on the CIA, one which well might send them chasing elsewhere — that is, to the White House and the National Security Council.

LYMAN B. KIRKPATRICK JR. is not unbiased. He joined the CIA at its formation in 1947, and although stricken by paralytic polio five years later, served as inspector general and executive director-comptroller until retiring in 1965. But Kirkpatrick has written an eminently objective book, and an eminently sensible one. And he dispassionately debunks some of the more pervasive myths about "The U.S. Intelligence Community":

— Despite such aberrations as the peculiar E. Howard Hunt, the CIA is staffed and run by bureaucrats, men who follow orders and avoid risks on their own initiative.

— "The secret government" does not exist. CIA's orders come from the White House. The men in Langley, and in the field, execute national policy, not make it.

— Congress is blind to CIA by its own choice. The machinery for overview exists;

dormancy is the fault of the legislators ("the reluctance of the members . . . to get into sensitive intelligence matters"), not CIA secrecy.

KIRKPATRICK DOES assert that CIA's furtiveness, although often necessary for logical security, is overdone; that "occasional official release of nonsensitive information . . . would help to alleviate the (public) fear of the secret and powerful system."

Indeed it could, and Hunt and ITT are prominent cases in point. When Hunt waved a White House badge at CIA in the Ellsberg case, it aided him briefly — then booted him off the premises. CIA listened to ITT (a primary function of

intelligence is to do just that), then politely said no thanks.

Further, the public furor over the ITT offer made it operationally impossible for CIA to toss out Allende even had the White House told it to do so; because of the political sensitivity of Chile, the Santiago station was cut to skeleton size months before the coup. Romanticism and James Bond notwithstanding, seven men can't overthrow a government.

A wise book. Read it before you are overwhelmed by the scare headlines.

Joseph C. Goulden, a Washington writer, is now working on books on the federal judiciary and on America between VJ-Day and Korea.